

'It is no intrusion,' she said, and her white lids drooped over the eyes under his earnest gaze. 'Why have you been so long? We have looked for you every day. Willie wrote that you had left London more than a week ago.'

'Yes, I have been in Fife with my brother,' he said briefly, for his heart was beating, his pulses thrilling, so that he could scarcely control himself. 'And how are you? Well, I hope.'

'Yes, thank you. I am afraid I greeted you rather unceremoniously,' she said, smiling now, and giving him her hand. 'You see you startled me. It is not often I am disturbed at the wishing-well.'

'Then you come often here?'

'Yes. It is a quiet spot. I like it,' she said quickly. 'Have you enjoyed your holiday? You were in need of it, Willie said.'

'Yes. It has been a hot, trying summer, and I have been working hard.'

'In what way? For the *Gazette*, or have you been writing on your own account?'

'Very little of that; I have had other work. Willie will tell you of it. We have been trying what we can for toilers less blessed than ourselves: God has given us some fruit already. But I made up my mind to leave the story for Willie to tell. He will be down whenever I go back.'

'Willie has told us something of it in his letters, and it made my heart burn. Oh, I could share such work, I am sure. My sympathies and prayers have always been with those who have tried to reclaim the lost.' She spoke simply, but with a deep earnestness, and her eyes grew dim with tears.